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SUBJECT: PRIVATE SECTOR CALCULATES ECONOMIC LOSS FROM STRIKES

¶1. SUMMARY. A local business group released the first report in Guinea calculating property damage and economic losses resulting from the strikes earlier this year. The damages claimed by the 418 participants in the report total nearly 1% of the FY07 fiscal receipts for the country. Actual losses are likely much higher since the report focuses narrowly on a small sample in the capital. Victims claimed that Guinea's armed forces were responsible for 70% of total property losses and 97% of casualties. END SUMMARY.

¶2. On July 19, Econoff attended the Groupe O.G.D.H. (Organisation Guineenne de Defense des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen) pour les Hommes d'Affaires (GOHA) ceremony for release of its final report on destruction of private businesses and property during the protests in January-February and May. During the ceremony, the President of GOHA, Mohamed Cherif, hand-delivered a copy of the report to the Secretary General of the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, M.

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Sekou Keita. Keita announced the creation of an Independent Commission to look into crimes committed during the protests and said he would forward them a copy of the GOHA report. He invited complainants to file cases with the new Commission

¶3. Detailing the losses suffered by the private sector during the period of unrest, the GOHA study is based upon the testimony of 418 victims. The total damage to these victims is estimated at US \$7.7 million, representing nearly 1% of total gross receipts in the FY07 budget.

¶4. GOHA is a private business organization, but is also affiliated with local human rights organizations. While this report focuses on property damage and economic losses, it also lists 41 cases of wounds suffered and 14 cases of deaths due to the unrest. These numbers reflect the testimonies of the 418 victims interviewed by GOHA and do not reflect a comprehensive accounting of all casualties.

¶5. According to the report, 70% of the losses caused by looting were the result of acts of government forces, while 30% of the damage was caused by the protestors. On the other hand, 97% of the physical injuries and deaths were caused by the forces of order, and 3% by the strikers.

¶6. The President of the National Assembly, M. Sampore, publicly stated on March 28 that all victims would receive fair compensation. This report is the first to calculate the economic damages from the unrest earlier this year.

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